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9D-HL-20014
PATENT

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for controlling locking a lid of a washing machine, the washing machine including an agitation element and a basket, said method comprising the steps of:

sensing a spin speed associated with a spin speed of at least one of the agitation element and the basket[;], such that the sensed speed is independent of oscillations of the agitation element and the basket; and

causing the lid to be locked when the sensed spin speed exceeds a first predetermined speed[; and]],

~~causing the lid to be unlocked when the sensed spin speed is below a second predetermined speed different from the first predetermined speed.~~

2. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein sensing a spin speed comprises the step of sensing rotation of a drive shaft for driving at least one of the agitation element and the basket.

3. (currently amended) A method in accordance with Claim 2 wherein the drive shaft extends from a clutch system and at least one magnet is secured to the shaft, and a sensor, and wherein sensing spin speed comprises the steps of:

operating the sensor to generate a signal when the at least one magnet passes by the sensor; and

generating a voltage signal representative of a spin speed based on the sensor generated signal, such that the voltage signal is independent of oscillations in the drive shaft.

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4. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 3 wherein the sensor generated signal is a square wave, and wherein a frequency to voltage converter is utilized to generate a voltage signal from the sensor generated square wave signal.

5. (previously presented) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein causing the lid to be locked when the sensed spin speed exceeds a first predetermined speed comprises the step of energizing a lid lock solenoid with the sensed spin speed exceeds the first predetermined speed.

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) A method in accordance with Claim [[1]] 18 wherein the first predetermined speed is greater than the second predetermined speed.

8. (currently amended) A lid lock system for a washing machine, the washing machine including a lid, an agitation element, a basket, and a transmission and clutch system, the transmission and clutch system including a drive shaft coupled to the agitation element and basket for causing the agitation element and basket to spin, said lid lock system comprising:

a sensor for generating an output signal associated with a spin speed of at least one of the agitation element and basket, said output signal being independent of oscillations of the agitation element and the basket;

a lid lock solenoid for controlling operation of a lid lock; and

a control circuit for energizing the lid lock solenoid based on the sensor output signal[[.]].

wherein said control circuit energizes said solenoid to lock the lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that exceeds a first predetermined speed, and de-energizes

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said solenoid to unlock the lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that is below a second predetermined speed different from the first predetermined speed.

9. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 further comprising at least one magnet secured to the drive shaft.

10. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 wherein the sensor comprises a Hall effect sensor.

11. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 wherein the control circuit comprises at least one flip flop.

12. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 11 wherein the control circuit further comprises a timer.

13. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 wherein the control circuit comprises a frequency to voltage converter.

14. (currently amended) A washing machine comprising:

a cabinet comprising an opening;

a lid movable from and between an open position and a closed position over said opening;

a lid lock for locking said lid in a closed position;

a basket mounted within said cabinet;

an agitation element mounted within said basket;

a drive system coupled to said agitation element and to said basket; and

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a lid lock circuit comprising a sensor for generating an output signal associated with a spin speed of at least one of said agitation element and basket, said output signal being independent of oscillations of said agitation element and said basket, a lid lock solenoid for controlling operation of said lid lock, and a control circuit for energizing said lid lock solenoid based on the sensor output signal[[],].

wherein said control circuit energizes said solenoid to lock said lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that exceeds a first predetermined speed, and de-energizes said solenoid to unlock said lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that is below a second predetermined speed different from the first predetermined speed.

15. (original) A washing machine according to Claim 14 wherein said lid lock circuit further comprises at least one magnet secured to the drive shaft.

16. (original) A washing machine according to Claim 14 wherein said sensor comprises a Hall effect sensor.

17. (original) A washing machine according to Claim 8 wherein said control circuit comprises at least one of a flip flop, a timer, and a frequency to voltage converter.

18. (new) A method in accordance with Claim 1 further comprising the step of causing the lid to be unlocked when the sensed spin speed is below a second predetermined speed.